

# Brain Injury Press

**Quarter 1, 2026, Issue 266**

**OUR MISSION:** to improve the quality of life for brain injury survivors and their families

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## surviveHEADSTRONG SD 2026 Walk & Health Fair presented by Thorson Law Group is HERE! Time to Raise Brain Injury Awareness Together!

We're excited to announce that SDBIF's **surviveHEADSTRONG San Diego presented by Thorson Law Group** is right around the corner—and we can't wait to bring our community together again for an unforgettable event with a powerful purpose.

This year, we're inviting you to join 700 of your closest friends, families, fellow survivors, professionals, and advocates as we come together for a day filled with connection, community, and purpose. surviveHEADSTRONG is more than an event—it's a place to share stories, offer hope and encouragement, and raise awareness about brain injury in a way that's uplifting, empowering, and unforgettable.

### A DAY OF ENERGY, EDUCATION & INSPIRATION

surviveHEADSTRONG 2026 will be buzzing with excitement from start to finish. Enjoy the lively music and fun atmosphere with DJ Jason Morris, keeping the energy high, while you connect with others who truly understand the journey of brain injury recovery.

You'll have the chance to learn and explore valuable support options through our incredible group of community exhibitors in the Health Fair area. From services and therapies to advocacy and local programs, it's an opportunity to get educated about brain injury resources—all in one place.

*continued on page 4*

March 21, 2026

San Diego 2026

PRESENTED BY

Scan the QR  
to Register  
TODAY!

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## COMMUNITY STANDOUT

### A Gift of Hope: Thank You to Sycuan and Treasurer Brianna Scharnow

The San Diego Brain Injury Foundation is deeply grateful to be selected as a recipient of Sycuan's annual Holiday Gift Giving Ceremony, a cherished tradition that supports organizations making a meaningful impact in our community.

Each year, Tribal Council Members and senior leaders from Sycuan's Management Team have the opportunity to designate a holiday gift to a charity of their choice. **We are honored to share that Brianna Scharnow, Treasurer of the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, selected the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation as her recipient and generously awarded us a gift of \$10,000.**

This incredible contribution will directly support our mission to serve individuals and families impacted by brain injury. Funds like these help us provide critical education, resources, and life-changing programs that promote recovery, resilience, and hope for those navigating the challenges of brain injury.

We are sincerely thankful to Treasurer Scharnow for her compassion and generosity, and to Sycuan for their continued commitment to giving back through the Holiday Gift Giving Ceremony. Partnerships like this strengthen our work and help ensure that survivors and families in our community never have to face recovery alone.

**From all of us at the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation—thank you for believing in our mission and for making a lasting difference this last holiday season.**



# A Message from SDBIF's Executive Director, Dr. Roslyn Knox

## Happy New Year Brain Injury Community Friends,

A new year brings more than a fresh calendar—it brings renewed possibility. At SDBIF, we're stepping into 2026 with a clear focus: strengthening the bridge between survivors, families, and the providers, practitioners, and advocates who help make recovery and reintegration more supported, more connected, and more achievable.

We've spent the past year building and launching programs designed to meet real-life needs. Now, we're moving into the next steps—expanding access, deepening the impact, and creating an even more cohesive plan-of-care stream so you don't have to navigate “what now?” alone. Brain injury can change everything, but it does not have to isolate you from the world, resources, relationships, or hope. We are here to walk (and roll) beside you.

Here are a few highlights of what's ahead in 2026:

- **SISR (Students Invested in Survivor Reintegration):** We're launching our third cohort, continuing weekly one-to-one advocacy, personalized resource plans, and consistent support to help survivors and families move forward, week by week.
- **ALT Library:** Need help with forms, agency portals, or assistive technology? Visit us for hands-on guidance and access to tools that support independence.
- **New mini technology workshops (in-person):** Practical sessions focused on social media, email, form completion, and everyday technology skills to build confidence and independence.
- **Brain Injury Collaboration Network (BICN):** A growing, vetted inter-referral network connecting brain-injury-informed providers and advocates to create coordinated, streamlined pathways of care.
- **Support groups:** Our support groups continue to offer connection and encouragement, with plans to add a Young Adult Support Group for ages 18–26.
- **Social and Creative Arts Programming:** From Days of Art and speaker series to game days and creative experiences like photography, these programs foster connection, expression, and healing through creativity.
- **Research that moves the mission forward:** Research shapes policy, access, and care. We're proud to highlight an NIH study with Dr. Terri Lawton of Harvard, with findings shared directly with our survivor community.

**AND DON'T FORGET**—Register now for the surviveHEADSTRONG San Diego Walk for Brain Injury Recovery on March 21 at Mission Bay. Last year we welcomed over 650 participants, and we can't wait to make this year even bigger. Bring your team, your family, your friends—come celebrate survivor tenacity and lift hope together.

To get involved, request support, or learn more, reach us at **619-294-6541** or **info@SDBIF.org**. Donors and supporters: thank you for making our free programs possible—please consider becoming a monthly donor. Every dollar helps expand access, services, and outreach to brain injury survivors in every community in San Diego County and surrounding counties.

With hope and forward momentum in 2026—Let's Thrive Together!

*With gratitude and anticipation,*



Roslyn Knox, Ph.D., MBA,  
Executive Director of SDBIF





*continued from page 1*

### **WALK OR ROLL FOR A CAUSE**

Whether you choose to walk or roll, your participation makes a real difference. Every step taken and every mile completed helps support the life-changing programs provided by the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation—programs that bring hope, connection, and resources to individuals and families navigating brain injury recovery.



Brain injuries can affect every part of life, and the road forward can be long. But events like Survive Headstrong remind us that no one has to face that journey alone.

### **THE WHERE AND WHEN**

Mission Bay Park DeAnza Cove  
2740 DeAnza Road, San Diego, CA 92109  
Saturday, March 21, 2026  
From 8am-1pm

Whether you've attended before or this will be your first year, this is a meaningful opportunity to show up, stand together, and make a real impact.

### **WHAT IS SURVIVEHEADSTRONG?**

surviveHEADSTRONG is more than an event—it's a movement. It's a day dedicated to raising awareness, funding, and support for brain injury recovery, while honoring the strength of survivors and the families who walk beside them.

Brain injuries can change a life in an instant. Recovery often takes months—or years—and the journey can be isolating, overwhelming, and expensive. Survive Headstrong exists to remind survivors: you are not alone, and your community is behind you.

For the second year in-a-row, we are honored to have Thorson Law Group be our Title sponsor, and the deRose Foundation has increased their level of involvement, so the first 500 participants will be getting an aluminum sports water bottle!



## WHO SHOULD COME?

The short answer: **EVERYONE**

- **Brain injury survivors** and those currently in recovery
- **Family members, caregivers, and friends** supporting someone they love
- **Medical/Legal professionals and therapists** who work in rehabilitation and recovery
- **Community members** who want to make a difference
- **Local businesses and sponsors** looking to support a meaningful cause
- **ANYONE** who believes in resilience, hope, and second chances

Whether you come to participate, volunteer, cheer others on, or simply learn more, your presence matters. If you're looking for a day that's meaningful, supportive, and full of heart—this is it.

## WHY THIS CAUSE MATTERS

Survivors may face challenges with memory, speech, balance, fatigue, mood, and daily functioning. Many people are working hard just to regain the pieces of life that others take for granted.

Supporting surviveHEADSTRONG means:

- Raising funds for recovery resources and rehabilitation efforts
- Education and awareness around brain injuries
- Hope for survivors and their families
- A stronger, more informed, compassionate community

Every step taken, every dollar raised, and every conversation started helps change what recovery looks like—for the better.

## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

- ATTEND** the event and invite friends and family
- DONATE** to support brain injury recovery
- SPONSOR** surviveHEADSTRONG San Diego 2026
- VOLUNTEER** your time
- SHARE** the mission on social media and amongst your community and friends

## SHOW UP! BE A PART OF SOMETHING POWERFUL

surviveHEADSTRONG is a celebration of resilience and a call to action for greater understanding, support, and awareness around brain injury. When we come together, we build a stronger community—and we help create a better future for survivors and their loved ones.

**Join us! Walk or roll. Learn. Connect. Support.**

For registration, sponsorship opportunities, or more information, scan the QR code below or go to:

[sdbif.org/walk](https://sdbif.org/walk)



**Scan the  
QR Code to  
Learn more  
about this  
year's event**



**Whether you can attend in person or not, there are SOOOOO many way to get involved with surviveHEADSTRONG with SDBIF presented by Thorson Law Group**



**Scan to REGISTER, JOIN A TEAM, or CREATE A TEAM**



**Scan to DONATE to a Team or in Honor of Someone**



**Scan to LEARN ABOUT being a sH26 Health Fair Exhibitor**





Proud Title Sponsor of the 2026 surviveHEADSTRONG San Diego

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Compassionately helping to find therapies for traumatic head injuries.



SanDiegoBrainInjury.com

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## 2026 Days of Art with Lovejoy: Two In-Person and Two Zoom-Based Events are Scheduled

SDBIF's Day of Art events offer brain injury survivors a welcoming space to explore creativity, connect with others, and enjoy a supportive, judgment-free experience. Led by Lovejoy Creations, these events focus on self-expression, encouragement, and community—no artistic experience required.

### WHY DAY OF ART MATTERS

Brain injury recovery can feel isolating. Many survivors struggle to find spaces where they feel understood, included, and valued. Day of Art intentionally creates that space.

These events celebrate survivors as whole people—not defined by their injury, but by their creativity, resilience, and voices. Moments of joy, laughter, and shared creativity can support emotional well-being and strengthen hope throughout recovery.

### IN-PERSON DAYS OF ART

**February 17 (already full) & July 17 from 12-2**

There are 15 spaces available for survivors to join us in person for a hands-on creative experience in a calm, supportive environment.

- Guided art activities led by Lovejoy Creations
- All materials provided
- A relaxed pace with no pressure or judgment
- Friendly staff and volunteers for support
- Opportunities to connect with other survivors

These events are about creativity, confidence, and connection—not perfection. Caregivers may attend if support is needed, though art materials cannot be guaranteed for caregivers.

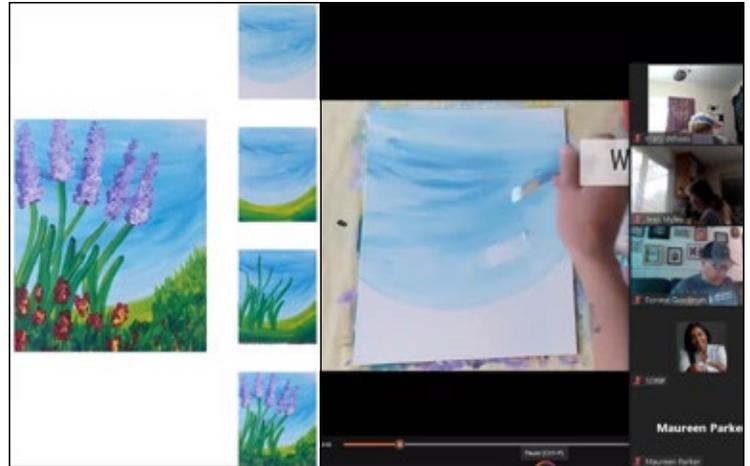
### VIRTUAL DAY OF ART (ZOOM)

**April 17 & October 16 from 12-2 (PST)**

There are 20 spaces available for survivors to participate from home in a live, interactive art session on Zoom.

- Guided painting instructions
- Art materials will be mailed to you in advance
- A supportive, low-stress virtual environment
- Connection with other survivors online

No art experience is needed—just log in, create, and enjoy the process from the comfort of your home.



**WHO SHOULD ATTEND**

Day of Art is open to brain injury survivors of all ages and stages of recovery. Whether you're newly injured or years into recovery, you're welcome to join.

So, whether in person or online, come create, connect, and enjoy a day designed to honor your recovery journey and lets your creativity shine.

Go to [SDBIF.org/events](https://SDBIF.org/events) for each Day of Art event's page to learn more and register!



**San Diego Disability Law Group, APC**

*Helping brain injury survivors and their families for over 35 years*

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[sandiegodisabilitylaw.com](https://sandiegodisabilitylaw.com)

**Personal Injury**

If you or a loved one has suffered a traumatic brain injury, you may have legal remedies available to you. These can include money for medical expenses, long-term medical care and rehabilitation, lost wages, pain, suffering and emotional distress. Brain injuries are often difficult to prove, and require the experience and expertise of a qualified brain injury attorney.

**Social Security Disability**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is governed by complicated rules and regulations. To understand them, you need to speak SSA language. In California and across the country, the SSA denies more than half (about 65%) of all initial applications for disability benefits. We understand how important it is to present a claim correctly from the outset, and your chances of obtaining benefits improve with the help of an experienced disability attorney.

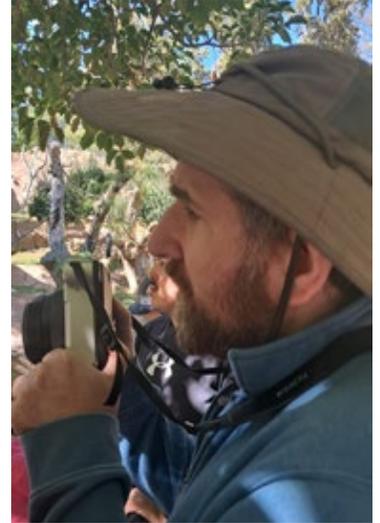
**To receive a FREE case review from an experienced attorney, please call:  
(619) 338-9000 or toll-free (877) 700-3994**

## Life at Howard House in 2026

The first few months of the year have been full of positive changes, meaningful moments, and exciting plans here at Howard House. As always, our focus remains on creating a supportive, engaging, and loving environment for our residents and the new year is off to a great start.

January welcomed a new chapter for our home with the arrival of Marisa Kautz, our newest resident. We are incredibly excited to have Marisa join the Howard House family and are happy to see her settling in and becoming part of our daily routines.

Throughout January and February, our residents stayed active and connected through community outings and social experiences. Some highlights included visits to the San Diego Zoo and Balboa Park, where residents enjoyed fresh air, movement, and quality time together outside the home. We are also currently exploring future volunteer opportunities, including potential



involvement with the Wolf Center, which we are very excited about and hope to share more details on soon.

Celebrations were a big part of these months.

- In January, we celebrated Richard's birthday, making sure his day was filled with smiles and special moments.
- February brought us Nico's birthday, another joyful occasion that allowed us to come together as a house and celebrate life's milestones.

Looking ahead to March, we are especially excited for our annual SDBIF SURVIVEHEADSTRONG Walk, taking place on March 21. This event is always meaningful for our community, and we are currently putting together the Howard House SDBIF team. If you are interested in walking with us or supporting our team, please reach out to Howard House, we would love to have you join us!

As we move into spring, we are grateful for the continued support of our families, staff, and community. Thank you for being part of the Howard House journey, we look forward to many more activities, celebrations, and shared moments in the months ahead.



## Art, Film, & Community: The Living Legacy of Lorencito Mio

“**Lorencito Mio**”, both the t-shirt business and the short film, grew from the seeds of grief that were planted in Rosina’s heart when her son, Lorenzo Roberto, passed after facing a difficult journey with autoimmune encephalitis; his love and light have nurtured the grief into the most beautiful flowers. Part of Rosina Guerra’s grief journey has been drawing. Lorenzo excitedly attended his weekly ABI online classes while rehabbing from home; Rosina would draw from her iPad as Lorenzo “repaired his cognitive loses”, with his new community. They were side by side on their devices-creating and learning. All of her artwork was more beautiful, because they were created while in his company. Once Lorenzo transcended to Heaven, she decided to do something with all of the art she created while at Lorenzo’s side and Lorencito Mio was conceptualized!

Lorencito Mio vends t-shirts, totes and coasters at various events in San Diego. She donates proceeds from every pop up to the SDBIF. Why San Diego Brain Injury Foundation? Because the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation’s sponsored ABI classes were such an integral part of Lorenzo’s rehab-his classmates became his new community. He loved his classmates and his teachers. She decided to support the organization that helped bring Lorenzo back to life. She believes in the work they do; the organization brings life, education and hope back to individuals and their families through the wealth of resources offered.

If you would like to learn about the next pop up and view past pop ups-check out her posts on **@lorencitomio**. If you’d like to learn more about Lorenzo’s journey with the illness, check out the film website: **Lorencitomio.com**. Bravo SDBIF!



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Upcoming 2026 Saturday Speaker Series Meetings

<b>SATURDAY, APR 18, 2026</b>	<b><i>In-Person &amp; Zoom</i></b> <i>Dr. Pang: Reclaim Your Life from Headaches &amp; Dizzines</i>	<b>IN-PERSON LOCATION</b> SD Writer's Ink, Liberty Station 2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204, San Diego, CA 92106
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<b>SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026</b>	<b><i>In-Person &amp; Zoom</i></b> <i>Dr. Matsuura, San Diego Center for Vision Care Optometry</i>	<b>IN-PERSON LOCATION</b> SD Writer's Ink, Liberty Station 2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204, San Diego, CA 92106
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<b>SATURDAY, JUL 11, 2026</b>	<b><i>In-Person ONLY</i></b> <b>GAME DAY!!!</b>	<b>IN-PERSON LOCATION</b> Admiral Baker Club House 2400 Admiral Baker Rd, San Diego, CA 92124
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 Want to see all of SDBIF's videos? [\*\*\*youtube.com/@sdbif\*\*\*](https://youtube.com/@sdbif)  
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## SDBIF & Community Upcoming Events

### SDBIF EVENTS

[sdbif.org/events](https://sdbif.org/events)



**REGISTER TODAY!!!**  
Saturday, March 21, 2026  
MISSION BAY PARK  
DE ANZA COVE



San Diego 2026  
PRESENTED BY TLG

**Scan the QR Code**

#### **FEB ZOOM** Family & Friends Support Group

Friday, Feb 13, 2026 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)  
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **FEB ZOOM** Survivor Peer Support Group

Friday, Feb 27, 2026 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)  
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **MAR ZOOM** Family & Friends Support Group

Friday, Mar 13, 2026 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)  
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **MAR ZOOM** Survivor Peer Support Group

Friday, Mar 27, 2026 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)  
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **APR ZOOM** Family & Friends Support Group

Friday, Apr 10, 2026 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)  
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

#### **APR VIRTUAL** Day of Art

Tuesday, Apr 17, 2026 from 12-2 pm (PST)  
Only 20 spaces are available—**Registration Opens in March**

#### **APR ZOOM** Survivor Peer Support Group

Friday, Apr 24, 2026 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)  
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

### 3<sup>RD</sup>-PARTY PARTNER EVENTS

#### NEUROLAB 360

**MORE INFO:** [neurolab360.com/free-services](https://neurolab360.com/free-services)  
(760) 704-8237

In-Person Adaptive Yoga—**EVERY Wed** @ 12 pm  
In-Person CogFit Group—**1<sup>st</sup> Thurs** @ 2 pm  
In-Person Aphasia Group—**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tues** @ 11 am  
In-Person Stroke Support Grp—**2<sup>nd</sup> Wed** @ 4 pm

#### UCSD PALS MEETINGS

**MORE INFO:** [mmw002@health.ucsd.edu](mailto:mmw002@health.ucsd.edu)

In-Person Art Class—**1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed** @ 2 pm  
In-Person Support Group—**1<sup>st</sup> Fri** @ 11 am  
ONLINE Aphasia Class—**3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs** @ 9 am

#### SCRIPPS STROKE & BRAIN INJURY

**MORE INFO:** Deborah Pimstone, 760-633-6709  
[pimstone.deborah@scrippshealth.org](mailto:pimstone.deborah@scrippshealth.org)

In-Person Brain Masters—**EVERY Wed** @ 2:30 pm  
HYBRID Stroke & TBI Support Group—**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tues**  
@ 2:30 pm

#### SHARP EVENTS

**MORE INFO:** Grace Latimer or Jim Lizardo,  
619-740-4683

Online Gentle Fitness—**EVERY Tues** @ 9 am



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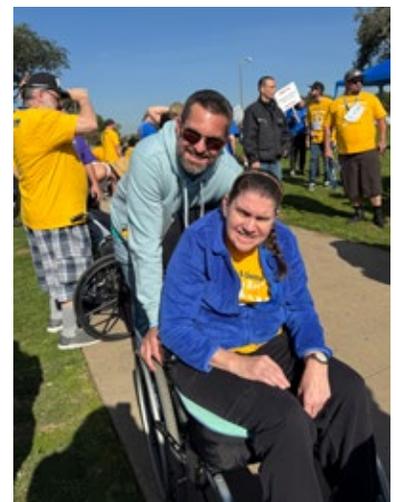
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San Diego  
Brain Injury Foundation

**BRAIN INJURY  
SYMPOSIUM**

**2026**

Navigating the  
Reintegration Journey  
After Brain Injury

*Speakers & Topics to be announced soon!*

# SAVE THE DATE!!!

## SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2026

@ ADMIRAL BAKER CLUB HOUSE

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**“The San Diego  
Brain Injury  
Foundation really  
helped me recover  
it all...They saved me  
from the isolation  
that some people  
actually experience.”**

Christina Hardy,  
brain injury survivor



## MARCH IS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH!

Saturday, March 21, 2026 | 8 am-1 pm | Mission Bay Park De Anza Cove

**Celebrate With All Your Brain Injury Recovery Friends**

REGISTER, CREATE OR JOIN A TEAM TODAY

**SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW OR GO TO [SDBIF.ORG/WALK](https://SDBIF.ORG/WALK)**

**There are so many ways to raise awareness, funds and support for the brain injury community...[SCAN](#) a QR Code below to:**

**Register, Create  
or Join a Team**



OR Go To This Link:  
[SDBIF.org/Register](https://SDBIF.org/Register)

**Make a  
Donation**



OR Go To This Link:  
[SDBIF.org/sHdonate](https://SDBIF.org/sHdonate)

**Be a Health Fair  
Exhibitor**



OR Go To This Link:  
[SDBIF.org/sHexhibit](https://SDBIF.org/sHexhibit)

